

**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

1           1.     A trench shield ladder in combination with a trench shield  
2           comprising:

3           two spaced apart trench shield walls, a plurality of support rods attaching  
4           between the two spaced apart trench shield walls to hold them apart and  
5           forming a working space between the two trench shield walls,

6           two approximately parallel front legs for removably engaging an inwardly  
7           facing surface of one trench shield wall, spaced apart main rungs  
8           extending between the two legs,

9           a top platform attached approximately perpendicular to upper ends of said  
10          legs for engaging said trench shield wall, hand rails extending over the  
11          platform,

12          at least one rear leg attached approximately perpendicular to said top  
13          platform and approximately parallel to said front legs for engaging an  
14          opposite outwardly facing surface of said trench shield wall, said hand  
15          rails being continuous with both said front and said rear legs, and

16 each of said front legs and each of said rear legs being rigidly secured  
17 relative to said platform.

1 2. A trench shield ladder in combination with a trench shield according  
2 to Claim 1 further comprising:

3 stand off arms provided on the front legs to removably engage an inwardly  
4 facing surface of said trench shield wall to hold the main rungs of the  
5 ladder away from the trench shield wall while still allowing the ladder to be  
6 moved relative to the trench shield wall.

1 3. A trench shield ladder in combination with a trench shield according  
2 to Claim 1 wherein the front legs are spaced apart from said at least one  
3 rear leg a sufficient distance to allow the front and rear legs to receive  
4 trench shield walls of varying thicknesses.

1 4. A trench shield ladder in combination with a trench shield according  
2 to Claim 1 further comprising:

3 an extension portion removably added to the bottom of the front legs, said  
4 extension portion having two extension legs with hooks at the upper end  
5 of each extension leg for removably hanging the extension portion on the

6 main rungs, and spaced apart extension rungs extending between the  
7 extension legs.

1 5. A trench shield ladder in combination with a trench shield according  
2 to Claim 4 further comprising:

3 stand off arms provided on the extension legs to removably engage an  
4 inwardly facing surface of the trench shield wall to hold the extension  
5 rungs away from the trench shield wall while still allowing the ladder to be  
6 moved relative to the trench shield wall.

1 6. A trench shield ladder in combination with a trench shield  
2 comprising:

3 two spaced apart trench shield walls, a plurality of support rods attaching  
4 between the two spaced apart trench shield walls to hold them apart and  
5 forming a working space between the two trench shield walls,

6 a front ladder with two front legs, spaced apart main rungs extending  
7 approximately perpendicular to and between said front legs, a top platform  
8 attached approximately perpendicular to said front ladder at an upper end  
9 of said front ladder, and at least one rear leg attached approximately

10 perpendicular to said top platform and approximately parallel to said front  
11 legs and spaced apart from said front legs, hand rails being continuous  
12 with both said front and said rear legs, and

13 each of said front legs and each of said rear legs being rigidly secured  
14 relative to said platform.

1 7. A trench shield ladder in combination with a trench shield according  
2 to Claim 6 further comprising:

3 at least one hand rail attached to said platform and extending over the  
4 platform.

1 8. A trench shield ladder in combination with a trench shield  
2 according to Claim 6 further comprising:

3 stand off arms provided on the front legs and extending toward the at least  
4 one rear leg to removably engage an inwardly facing surface of one trench  
5 shield wall in order to hold the main rungs of the front ladder away from  
6 the trench shield wall while still allowing the ladder to be moved relative to  
7 the trench shield wall.

1           9.     A trench shield ladder in combination with a trench shield according  
2           to Claim 6 wherein the front legs are spaced apart from said at least one  
3           rear leg a sufficient distance to allow trench shield walls of varying  
4           thicknesses to be removably inserted between the front and rear legs.

1           10.    A trench shield ladder in combination with a trench shield according  
2           to Claim 6 further comprising:

3           an extension portion removably added to the bottom of the front legs, said  
4           extension portion having two extension legs with hooks at the upper end  
5           of each extension leg for removably hanging the extension portion on the  
6           main rungs, spaced apart extension rungs extending between the  
7           extension legs.

1           11.    A trench shield ladder in combination with a trench shield according  
2           to Claim 10 further comprising:

3           rearwardly extending stand off arms provided on the front legs and the  
4           extension legs to removably engage an inwardly facing surface of one  
5           trench shield wall in order to hold the main rungs and the extension rungs  
6           away from the trench shield wall while still allowing the ladder to be moved  
7           relative to the trench shield wall.